

## Message Text

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SUBJECT: 25TH PARTY CONGRESS: LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATION AT THE CONGRESS

1. SUMMARY. ANALYSIS OF WHICH LEADERS MADE SPEECHES AT THE 24TH AND 25TH PARTY CONGRESSES SHOWS A VERY SIMILAR PATTERN. PARTICIPATION BY NATIONAL PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN THE LEADERSHIP IS LIMITED, IN CONTRAST TO PARTICIPATION BY REGIONAL OFFICIALS. SOMEWHAT GREATER ATTENTION APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN FOCUSED ON SHCHERBITSKIY AND ROMANOV THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED. END SUMMARY.

2. VARIOUS RUMORS AROUND TOWN ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PARTICIPATION OR NONPARTICIPATION OF THE LEADERSHIP IN CONGRESS ACTIVITIES HAS PROMPTED US TO TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THE SITUATION. PARTICIPATION IN DEBATES AT THE CONGRESS APPARENTLY WAS RESERVED FOR REGIONAL PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AMONG THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP. PARTY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL PLAYED A MUCH LESS PROMINENT ROLE IN THE PROCEEDINGS.

3. AMONG PARTY OFFICIALS IN THE LEADERSHIP, BREZHNEV, KAPITONOV (MANDATE COMMISSION REPORT) AND PONOMAREV (RESOLUTION ON IMPERIALISM) ARE THE ONLY SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS

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TION ON IMPERIALISM) ARE THE ONLY SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS

WHO HAVE ADDRESSED THE CONGRESS. MOREOVER, WITHIN THE CC SECRETARIAT ONLY THOSE WITH FULL POLITBURO RANK (SUSLOV KIRILENKO, KULAKOV) HAVE CHAIRED A SESSION OF THE CONGRESS. REGIONAL PARTY OFFICIALS IN THE LEADERSHIP (GRISHIN, SHCHERBITSKIY, KUNAYEV, MASHEROV, ROMANOV, AND RASHIDOV), ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE ALL TAKEN THE ROSTRUM AND SHCHERBITSKIY, KUNAYEV, AND ROMANOV HAVE CHAIRED SESSIONS OF THE CONGRESS.

4. PARTICIPATION OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IS EVEN MORE LIMITED. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF KOSYGIN'S ECONOMIC REPORT, THE ONLY OTHER LEADERSHIP OFFICIAL WITH A NATIONAL POSITION TO PARTICIPATE WAS PODGORNYY, WHO CHAIRED THE THIRD SESSION OF THE CONGRESS. THE ONLY REGIONAL GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIAL IN THE LEADERSHIP -- SOLOMENTSEV, CHAIRMAN RSFSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS -- SPOKE DURING DISCUSSION OF BREZHNEV'S CC REPORT.

5. THE EFFECT OF THESE APPARENT PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES HAS BEEN TO PROVIDE NO VISIBLE ROLE IN THE PROCEEDINGS FOR CENTRAL COMMITTEE SECRETARIES USTINOV, KATUSHEV AND DOLGIKH AND USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OFFICIALS ANDROPOV, GRECHKO, GROMYKO, MAZUROV, POLYANSKIY, AND DEMICHEV.

6. THE PATTERNS OF PARTICIPATION OBSERVED AT THIS CONGRESS IS STRIKINGLY SIMILAR TO THE ONE AT THE 24TH CONGRESS. AT THAT CONGRESS, WITH THE EXCEPTIONS OF KOSYGIN AND PODGORNYY NATIONAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS DID NOT PARTICIPATE. SHCHERBITSKIY, A REGIONAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL AT THAT TIME, DID GIVE A REPORT BUT VORONOV, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE RSFSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, DID NOT (HE LOST THIS POSITION LATER IN THE YEAR AND HIS POLITBURO RANK IN 1973). BOTH GROMYKO AND GRECHKO MADE SPEECHES, BUT AT THAT TIME THEY DID NOT HAVE POLITBURO RANK. PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS WAS IDENTICAL TO THE PATTERN OBSERVED AT THE 25TH CONGRESS.

7. ONLY THREE DEVELOPMENTS AT THIS CONGRESS APPEAR TO BE DEVIATIONS FROM THE PATTERN SET AT THE 24TH: (A) SHCHERBITSKIY CHAIRED A SESSION EARLIER THAN HIS COUNTERPART SHELEST DID IN 1971. SHCHERBITSKIY ALSO SEEMED TO BE SINGLED OUT FOR ATTENTION-- AS WAS KUNAYEV -- BY CHAIRING A SESSION OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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25TH CONGRESS AHEAD OF POLITBURO SECRETARY KULAKOV; (B) ROMANOV HAS BEEN THE ONLY CANDIDATE POLITBURO MEMBER WHO HAS CHAIRED A SESSION

OF THE CONGRESS. AT THE 24TH, HOWEVER, GRISHIN, KUNAYEV, MASHEROV AND RASHIDOV, ALL CANDIDATES AT THE TIME, HAD A TURN IN THE CHAIR: (C) PODGORNYY CHAIRED THE THIRD SESSION AT THE 25TH CONGRESS, IN CONTRAST TO THE FIRST SESSION AT THE 24TH.

8. IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABOVE, MFA PROTOCOL CHIEF NIKOFOROV TOLD U.K. DIPLOMAT YESTERDAY THAT ROMANOV WOULD DEFINITELY BE MOVING UP TO THE POLITBURO AND THAT KAPITONOV WOULD BE TAKING OVER THE TRADE UNIONS. NIKIFOROV ALSO DENIED REPEATED RUMORS THAT MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE POLYANSKIY IS ABOUT TO BE SACKED FROM THE POLITBURO.

9. COMMENT: THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP IN THE CONGRESS IS CERTAINLY AN INDICATOR OF POLITICAL STATUS. HOWEVER, PARTICIPATION OR NON-PARTICIPATION PROBABLY HAS POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE ONLY IF IT DEVIATES FROM AN OTHERWISE CONSISTENT PATTERN. SHCHERBITSKIY AND ROMANOV THEREFORE SEEM TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN A BOOST BY THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE 25TH CONGRESS. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT THINK THAT THE NON-PARTICIPATION OF MOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND SOME PARTY OFFICIALS IN THE LEADERSHIP SHOULD BE INTERPRETED NEGATIVELY WITH RESPECT TO THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED, SINCE IT CONFORMS TO THE PATTERN OBSERVED FIVE YEARS AGO. IN SHORT, WHILE SOME OF THE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE NOT PERFORMED AT THE ROSTRUM COULD CONCEIVABLY BE IN POLITICAL TROUBLE, NONPARTICIPATION AT THIS CONGRESS DOES NOT BY ITSELF SEEM A SIGNIFICANT INDICATOR OF THEIR CURRENT POLITICAL STANDING.

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